

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

2- U.S. EXTENSION SERVICE

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For Use in National  
Home Demonstration  
Week Book

INSECT CONTROL SUGGESTIONS  
For National Home Demonstration Week

The old adage "A stitch in time saves nine" applies no more forcefully anywhere than in insect control. In fact, in many cases the control of fabric pests would eliminate the need for the first stitch.

The increased interest in pest control on the part of home economists and farm women leaders, along with the development of new insecticides and insect-control measures, has considerably lessened the insect nuisance to the home as well as the losses to clothing, furniture, and foods occasioned by insect pests. However, judging by the great number of inquiries the entomologists receive from women, much can still be done to extend greater knowledge of pest control to all homemakers.

There are many things that might be done during National Home Demonstration Week that would help highlight the celebration and at the same time stimulate better pest control.

A county or State might popularize, through the usual channels, any outstanding job on household pest control done by a community group. Likewise someone in the State extension office could popularize any well-planned and executed pest-control program that was carried on by a county home demonstration agent.

To guide local leaders in featuring entomology this year, discussion outlines on a number of phases of insect control could be developed in each State by the home economics extension people in cooperation with the extension entomologists. The following are some of the topics upon which discussion outlines could be prepared:

- (1) Reading insecticide labels.
- (2) Home demonstration workers strengthen health programs through better insect pest control.
- (3) Protect your woolens and furs by proper storage.
- (4) Stop the discomforts from annoying pests.
- (5) Pantry pests or food?
- (6) Growing flowers and shrubbery for beauty and not for bugs.



Reading Insecticide Labels.- There are many new and complex insecticides. These could be used more effectively and cheaply if we all knew how to read and interpret the labels correctly. It would help to be able to buy the best possible insecticide to control a particular insect. A discussion outline on this subject might suggest having the women bring to their group discussion meeting labels from insecticide packages that they had purchased previously. If they do not have any insecticides they might arrange to borrow some from a local merchant in order to study the labels. The discussion outline might also include hypothetical labels showing two types of ingredient statements acceptable under the Federal and possibly the State Insecticide Act. After studying the ingredient statements and the recommendations appearing on the labels, together with information prepared by the entomologist, the women could buy insecticides more intelligently.

Home Demonstration Workers Strengthen Health Programs Through Better Insect Pest Control.- A discussion outline on insect pest control as an aid to health might include brief information on the life habits of insects, such as flies, mosquitoes, and ticks, or give references to literature on the subject, especially since knowledge of life habits would aid in control of the pests. All aids to control should be discussed, to avoid dependence on insecticides alone. The discussion outlines might include a list of some of the diseases in the area transmissible by insects.

Protect Your Woolens and Furs by Proper Storage.- Farm women have done much in the protection of clothing against insects, but with new homemakers and new insecticides this can always be made a live subject. Womens' groups could bring moth-eaten garments to a meeting to show types of damage. With a little preparation, adult clothes moths and carpet beetles could be made available if, about a month before the meeting, some woman found live larvae (worms) in woolens or furs and placed the larvae in a fruit jar, with lid, with some scraps of wool. The larvae would complete their development. The jar could be taken to the meeting and the women could see at first hand the small moths that are parents of the clothes moth larvae, or see carpet beetles, the parents of the carpet beetle larvae (buffalo bugs). The discussion outline could give suggestions for prevention and control of the pests, such as sunning, airing, brushing, storing, and the use of insecticides.

Stop the Discomforts from Annoying Pests.- The topic of annoying insects could cover life habits and control of many pests, such as ants, roaches, fruitflies, vinegar flies, boxelder bugs, clover mites, spiders, and centipedes. Samples of the pests that are available at the time might be used at the meeting to help those present to recognize the pest.

Pantry Pests or Food? - The better heated homes of today permit breeding of many pantry pests the year around. One compensatory factor is the smaller quantities of beans and cereals stored in pantries than in former years. The great number of inquiries from women asking for identifications of certain insects suspected of being clothes moths or carpet beetles which turn out to be bean weevils or Indian meal moths suggests that the pests are breeding somewhere about the house and are constituting a problem.



A discussion topic, which would help women to recognize these pests and to know what control measures to use, would prove most helpful.

Growing Flowers and Shrubs for Beauty and Not for Bugs.- A discussion outline on the growing of ornamental plants and their protection from insects would dovetail with the "Plant America for More Natural Living" program as well as supply information on the pests destructive to flowers and shrubs already planted in and around the homes.



